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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI  
NORTHERN DIVISION

BARBIE BASSETT PLAINTIFF  
VS. CAUSE NO. 3:23-CV-03154-DPJ-ASH  
GRAY MEDIA GROUP DEFENDANT

\*\*\*\*\*

ZOOM DEPOSITION OF MAGGIE WADE-DIXON

\*\*\*\*\*

TAKEN AT THE INSTANCE OF THE PLAINTIFF  
ON OCTOBER 3, 2024, BEGINNING AT 1:58 P.M.

GENA MATTISON GLENN, MS CSR 1568, TN LCR 884  
Glenn-Henry Reporting  
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EXHIBIT "D"

APPEARANCES:

WAIDE & ASSOCIATES

P.O. Box 1357

Tupelo, MS 38802-1357

For the Plaintiff

BY: RACHEL PIERCE WAIDE

SMOAK & STEWART

International Place Tower II

6410 Poplar Avenue, Suite 300

Memphis, TN 38119

For the Defendant

BY: M. KIMBERLY HODGES

ALSO PRESENT: KEITH MILLER

BARBIE BASSETT

Reported by: GENA MATTISON GLENN,  
MS CSR 1568, TN LCR 884  
GLENN-HENRY REPORTING

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## WITNESS

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MAGGIE WADE-DIXON

Examination by Ms. Rachel Pierce Wade

4

## EXHIBIT

NO. DESCRIPTION

PAGE

(No Exhibits)

1 MAGGIE WADE-DIXON,  
2 being first duly sworn, was examined and  
3 testified under oath as follows:  
4

5 MS. WAIDE: Kim, just for the record  
6 we're taking this deposition pursuant to  
7 the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, I  
8 assume; and we can have the agreement that  
9 we're reserving all objections except as to  
10 the form.

13:58:48

11 MS. HODGES: Yes. Correct.  
12

13 EXAMINATION

14 BY MS. WAIDE:

15 Q. Ms. -- I was going to call you  
16 Ms. Wade. Do you prefer Ms. Wade-Dixon or  
17 Ms. Wade?

18 A. I answer to either. It's --

19 Q. Okay. Good.

13:58:58

20 A. -- (indiscernible).

21 Q. Well, you know, I'm Ms. Waide as well,  
22 obviously; but we spell it a different way. But  
23 I always feel like that's my husband's mother,  
24 right? It's Ms. Waide. Right? So I'm just --

25 A. Either way. Either way.

1           Q.    I'm just Rachel for you, and we  
2    appreciate so much your being here today.  I  
3    told you before we went on the record that I  
4    represent Ms. Bassett.  My husband and I  
5    practice law together up in Tupelo.  And so we  
6    represent her in this claim that she has filed.

7                   Have you ever given a deposition  
8    before?

9           A.    No.

13:59:29 10          Q.    That's not a bad thing.  It's probably  
11   a positive thing for your life.

12                   I'll give you just a couple of ground  
13   rules, and those are:  We have a court reporter,  
14   Ms. Glenn, who is in Amory, Mississippi, I  
15   think; and she is typing everything that you say  
16   and everything that I say.  That means that we  
17   need you to answer out loud, because I'm looking  
18   at you, so when you nod your head yes to me, I  
19   know what that means.  But she needs to type it  
13:59:55 20   down so that when we look back at this, a year  
21   later or two years later, we'll know exactly  
22   what you meant, so if you'll answer out loud.

23                   Also, this is something that I'm very  
24   guilty of doing.  We have to be careful not to  
25   talk over one another.  It's so natural in

1 conversation. We're -- we're talking to each  
2 other, we're interacting, and then we start to  
3 speak over one another. And she can't type two  
4 voices at once. So you'll have to remind me  
5 about that, and I'll do the same about you.

6 A. Thank you.

7 Q. Also this is not some sort of  
8 endurance test. If you need a break at any  
9 time, something's going on, there's a big story  
10 at the station, you know, you need to step out,  
11 you just need to run to the restroom, you tell  
12 me and we're happy to take a break. Again, not  
13 an endurance test.

14 So with that out of the way, do you  
15 have any questions before we get started? Are  
16 you comfortable where you are, ready to get  
17 going?

18 A. Yes. Ready to go.

19 Q. Okay. Well, we appreciate, again,  
20 your being here.

21 This is sort of an odd question, but I  
22 have to ask it of everyone because I had it come  
23 up once. Are you taking any medication today --  
24 not any medication but any medication that might  
25 impair your ability to understand my questions

1 or impair your ability to answer truthfully.

2 A. No.

3 Q. Okay. This is another -- I'm getting  
4 all the bad questions out of the way early,  
5 Ms. Wade, or Ms. Wade-Dixon. Because this case  
6 involves age and race, I have to ask: What is  
7 your age?

8 A. My age is 63.

9 Q. Okay. And what is your race?

14:01:21 10 A. African-American.

11 Q. Where are you from?

12 A. Crystal Springs, Mississippi.

13 Q. You are from where my friend Justice  
14 Jim Kitchens is from.

15 A. Yes. Yes.

16 Q. You know (indiscernible)?

17 A. I've known him all my life.

18 Q. Yes. Well, me too -- well, almost my  
19 whole life. Probably about 25 years, so not my  
14:01:40 20 whole life. But I always say I'm 27, so, you  
21 know, kind of --

22 A. He's a dear family friend.

23 Q. Yes. Same with us. I'm glad you two  
24 know each other. And where do you live now?

25 A. Brandon, Mississippi.

1 Q. And can you tell us just a little bit  
2 about your educational background? You don't  
3 have to go all the way back to elementary  
4 school, but maybe where you finished high school  
5 and then college.

6 A. I finished high school at Utica High  
7 School, and then I went to Jackson State  
8 University. Transferred my sophomore year to  
9 Mississippi College, and my degree is from  
10 Mississippi College in business administration.

11 Q. Did you do any additional training  
12 after your time at MC?

13 A. No.

14 Q. I'm sorry?

15 A. No.

16 Q. Did I step -- are you married?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And to whom are you married?

19 A. Nathaniel Andre Dixon.

20 Q. Have you ever been married before?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Do you have any children?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Are those children over the age of 21?

25 A. Yes.



1 Q. And where do they live?

2 A. My son lives in Chicago and my  
3 daughter in Jackson, Mississippi.

4 Q. And what's your daughter's name who's  
5 in Jackson?

6 A. Kimberly Ward.

14:03:00

7 Q. Tell us just a little bit about your  
8 employment background. Obviously you're here  
9 today because you're working at the television  
10 station, right? How did you get from MC into  
11 the television world?

12 A. Well, actually, all of my -- I worked  
13 in work-study jobs. All of my work-study jobs  
14 at Mississippi College dealt with  
15 communications, and I was hired here my senior  
16 year.

17 Q. So straight out of college?

18 A. Yeah. Well, before I graduated. I  
19 was a senior, and I've been here since then.

14:03:28

20 Q. Ever worked at any other television  
21 stations?

22 A. No. This is the only one.

23 Q. Okay. I know that you have been in  
24 various spots anchoring or coanchoring various  
25 shows. What is your position now at the

1 station?

2 A. I am an anchor for 5:00 and 10:00 and  
3 news reporter.

4 Q. Okay. At the time that Ms. Bassett  
5 was at the station, do you remember what your  
6 job was then?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. What schedule you were working?

9 A. Yes. 5:00 and 10:00.

14:04:00 10 Q. Okay. Still --

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. -- the 5:00 and 10:00?

13 A. Uh-huh.

14 Q. Okay. Have you ever been involved in  
15 any prior litigation? You told us you've not  
16 given a deposition, but have you ever been  
17 involved in a lawsuit?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Do you know of any other station  
14:04:17 20 employees who have been involved in litigation  
21 with the station? And let me expand on that a  
22 little bit. Maybe they have sued the station  
23 because they allege they were wrongfully  
24 terminated. Maybe they had a dispute over a  
25 noncompete agreement. Maybe they had a wreck in

1 the station news car, right?

2 Do you know of any station employees  
3 during your tenure there -- and I realize that's  
4 a long tenure -- who have been involved in  
5 litigation with the station?

6 A. No.

7 MS. HODGES: Object to form.

8 BY MS. WAIDE:

9 Q. Okay. That's a no? I'm sorry. You  
10 can go ahead and answer.

14:04:51

11 A. No.

12 Q. Thank you.

13 Have you ever been a witness in a  
14 case? Have you ever had to go to court and be a  
15 witness?

16 A. No.

17 Q. I want to --

18 A. Not that I --

19 Q. Okay. I want to talk a little bit  
20 about your employment at the station. Have you  
21 ever had -- I know you haven't had any lawsuits  
22 with the station. Have you ever had reprimands  
23 or discipline from the station?

14:05:08

24 A. No.

25 Q. Have you had any issues over your

1 contract with the station?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Do you know of other anchors who might  
4 have had disciplinary actions -- I'm calling it  
5 a disciplinary action or a reprimand. I'm not  
6 certain what you call it. Sometimes in the  
7 employment we call it a write-up or a  
8 counseling. Do you know of other anchors who  
9 have had that?

14:05:48 10 MS. HODGES: Object to form. You can  
11 answer, Ms. Wade.

12 A. No.

13 BY MS. WAIDE:

14 Q. Okay. I'd like to turn a little bit  
15 to Ms. Bassett and how you know her. How did  
16 you get to know her?

17 A. I met her when she first came to work  
18 here. She came to do weather, and -- and then  
19 we actually worked the same shift when she was  
14:06:12 20 chief meteorologist for the 10:00 o'clock  
21 newscast; and then we worked together on the  
22 4:00 and 4:30 newscast for several years along  
23 with Stephanie Bell Flynt.

24 Q. So how long would you say you've known  
25 her? Can you give me an estimate on the number

1 of years?

2 A. Estimate, over 20 years, maybe.

3 Q. A long time.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. How would you describe your  
6 relationship with her?

7 A. I've always had great love for her and  
8 consider her a friend.

9 Q. Can you describe for us her work? How  
10 was her work at the station?  
14:06:48

11 A. Hard worker. Dedicated. Loved what  
12 she did. Always loved what she did.

13 Q. Did you two have a friendship outside  
14 of work or were you strictly co-workers?

15 A. We did have a friendship outside of  
16 work, yes.

17 Q. Have you maintained that friendship  
18 with her or not since her termination?

19 A. Yes. We're still friends.

14:07:18 20 Q. Did you have the opportunity, as part  
21 of your work at the station, to see Ms.  
22 Bassett's interaction with other people who  
23 worked at the station?

24 A. When we worked the same shift, yes.

25 Q. Were those people of different ages

1 and different races that worked at the station?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Can you describe for us what her  
4 relationship was like with the other people who  
5 worked at the station?

6 MS. HODGES: Object to form. You can  
7 answer.

8 A. Very friendly.

9 BY MS. WAIDE:

14:07:50 10 Q. Did you know of her having any bad  
11 relationships with the people with whom she  
12 worked at the station?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Did you ever have any opportunity to  
15 observe Ms. Bassett's interactions with viewers?  
16 In other words, did viewers ever come for  
17 interviews, maybe -- maybe people came in for an  
18 interview on the show, or maybe they came for a  
19 station tour? Did you ever have any opportunity  
14:08:15 20 to observe that?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. What did you observe about  
23 Ms. Bassett's interaction with viewers?

24 A. Friendly, warm, loving, and grateful.

25 Q. I want to take you forward to October

1 of 2022 and see if you remember. We're calling  
2 this sort of the "grandmammy" comment. I don't  
3 know if you remember. I think Ms. Bassett was  
4 on air with Carmen Poe, and they were talking  
5 about football, and she made a comment that  
6 included the word "grandmammy." Were you aware  
7 of that?

8 A. I was not -- are -- I don't understand  
9 exactly --

14:08:56 10 Q. Let me ask a better question.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Were you at the station or able to  
13 witness that comment live, in person?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Did you hear about it at some later  
16 time?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Tell me how you heard about it.

19 A. Barbie called me.

14:09:14 20 Q. Can you tell us about that  
21 conversation?

22 A. Yes. She was very remorseful, very  
23 sad, confused, because she said, you know -- she  
24 explained to me, which I already knew, she  
25 didn't mean it in malice or in a negative -- any

1 negative way. And I think she was shocked at  
2 the reception of how people reacted to her using  
3 that word.

4 Q. Did she tell you why she chose that  
5 word to describe a grandmother?

6 A. Yes. She said that it was a word that  
7 she heard growing up from some of the women who  
8 worked with her mom and worked in her home, and  
9 that that is what they called their  
10 grandmothers, and so she was not aware that it  
11 was a term that many saw as offensive.

12 Q. What did you tell her about that?

13 A. I told her that it was -- when I was  
14 growing up if you used that word, it was an  
15 automatic fight because it was seen as something  
16 negative and demeaning, and it was not a word  
17 that I used or -- and even if other  
18 African-Americans said it to you, that it was an  
19 automatic fight because it was a demeaning term.

20 Q. Right. And how did she respond to  
21 that?

22 A. She didn't know. She said, I really  
23 didn't know.

24 Q. Did you know whether or not the  
25 station disciplined her in any way for that



1 comment?

2 A. I saw her apology. She told me that  
3 she was going to apologize.

4 Q. Did you know if she wrote that apology  
5 or how that apology got on air?

6 A. I don't know. I assume she wrote it.

7 Q. Did you weigh in in any way on the  
8 content of that apology?

9 A. No.

14:11:06 10 Q. She didn't run it by you or ask you  
11 what you thought, anything like that?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Did the station ask your opinion --  
14 you are an African-American female. Did anyone  
15 associated with the station ask you your opinion  
16 of the comment?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Who asked you that?

19 A. Our general manager.

14:11:28 20 Q. And who was that?

21 A. Ted Fortenberry.

22 Q. What did Ted ask you?

23 A. He just asked me if I was okay. He  
24 was concerned about me, and he asked me how I  
25 was feeling. And he was obviously very

1 concerned about the other employees as well, in  
2 addition to Barbie.

3 Q. Right. And he was concerned about  
4 Barbie, you said?

5 A. Yes. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. Let's talk first about the  
7 other employees. Which other employees was  
8 Mr. Fortenberry concerned about?

9 A. All of us. The entire station.

10 Q. What do you think brought on his  
11 concern?

12 A. The number of emails and phone calls  
13 that we received after the comment.

14 Q. Were you personally receiving those  
15 emails, or were they coming to the station in  
16 general?

17 A. Both.

18 Q. Were you turning over those emails to  
19 someone at the station or just responding to  
20 them yourself?

21 A. I didn't respond to any of them, and I  
22 didn't turn them over, no.

23 Q. Did you know whether or not anyone  
24 else at the station responded to those emails?

25 A. No.

1 Q. And I asked you a very bad question.  
2 Do you know whether -- did anyone tell you, for  
3 example, I'm -- look, I'm going to respond to  
4 these emails; this is the response that we're  
5 sending out?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Okay. Did the station or anyone  
8 associated with the station ask you to gather  
9 those emails?

14:12:57 10 A. No.

11 Q. Did you have a discussion with Carmen  
12 Poe about this comment?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Did you have a discussion with any  
15 other station employees about the comment?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. With whom did you discuss the comment?

18 A. It was general in the newsroom. As  
19 you can imagine, most of us were concerned.

14:13:24 20 Q. And tell me why you were concerned.

21 A. I was concerned about Barbie because I  
22 felt like, you know, she did not mean it with  
23 malice. But I was also concerned because there  
24 were others who were offended. And again, we  
25 were being bombarded with phone calls and emails

1 with people who were concerned about the  
2 statement.

3 Q. I want to back up to when you told me  
4 Mr. Fortenberry was concerned about all of you  
5 but he was also concerned about Barbie.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Did he express anything to you about  
8 his concern about Ms. Bassett?

9 A. He just wanted to make sure everyone  
10 was okay. He knew she was having a hard time,  
11 as he knew that most of us were.

12 Q. Did Mr. Fortenberry or anyone  
13 associated with the station ever say anything to  
14 you such as, Ms. Bassett should be terminated  
15 over this?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Did you think anyone else associated  
18 with the station believed she should be  
19 terminated over it?

14:14:31 20 MS. HODGES: Object to the form.

21 A. No.

22 BY MS. WAIDE:

23 Q. You may answer. I'm sorry.

24 Occasionally she'll --

25 MS. HODGES: She did --

1 BY MS. WAIDE:

2 Q. -- object to the form.

3 MS. HODGES: I'm sorry. She --

4 MS. WAIDE: I couldn't hear it at all.

5 I'm sorry.

6 MS. HODGES: Yeah. She did.

7 And just while we're taking a minute,

8 I'll just remind you, Ms. Wade: You can

9 answer if I -- when I object unless I'm

10 specifically telling you not to.

14:14:51

11 So go ahead. Sorry, Rachel. She did

12 answer it, but I'll let her answer again.

13 BY MS. WAIDE:

14 Q. I'm sorry. Could you answer that

15 again for me? I couldn't hear it.

16 A. No.

17 Q. No. Okay. Thank you.

18 After this comment, after Ms. Bassett

19 issued her on-air apology, how was she treated

20 at the station?

14:15:17

21 A. We worked different shifts, so I don't  
22 know.

23 Q. Since you weren't there with her, did

24 anyone on your shift or anyone you had contact

25 with tell you how they were treating

1 Ms. Bassett?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Did Ms. Bassett herself tell you if  
4 she -- tell you whether or not she was being  
5 treated any differently?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. What did she tell you about that?

8 A. She mentioned that Carmen told her she  
9 was not offended, and I think several others on  
10 that shift mentioned that they were not offended  
11 and, I think, expressed their concern for her.

12 Q. Is that Carmen Poe you're talking  
13 about --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- just for the sake of the record?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And Carmen Poe, again, for the sake of  
18 the record, was the reporter with whom  
19 Ms. Bassett was having the conversation, right?

14:16:16 20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And I think I cleared this up, but I  
22 want to be sure. At no point did you ever  
23 discuss the "grandmammy" comment with Carmen  
24 Poe; is that correct?

25 A. No, I did not.

1 Q. Did you believe that there should have  
2 been some sort of discipline or serious  
3 repercussions for the "grandmammy" comment?

4 A. No.

5 Q. I want to take you forward, then,  
6 after that comment, to March 8 of 2023. And  
7 that's the date I'll represent to you that there  
8 was a comment on air by Ms. Bassett repeating  
9 something that Snoop Dogg had said, is the "fo  
10 shizzle my nizzle" comment. And I'll ask you  
11 sort of the same questions that I asked you  
12 about the "grandmammy" comment.

13 Were you present for that comment?

14 A. No.

15 Q. You-all were still working different  
16 shifts, right?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. Did you know that the comment  
19 was made?

20 A. After Barbie told me. I think Barbie  
21 called me.

22 Q. Tell us about that conversation.

23 A. Again, she was devastated. She was  
24 crying. I think we did more praying and talking  
25 about God than we actually did the comment. And

1 I told her I didn't know what it meant. I don't  
2 listen to rap, but --

3 Q. We will not tell Snoop that. We will  
4 not. Right?

5 A. But I Googled the word and I explained  
6 to her, you know, why that word would be  
7 offensive.

8 Q. But you were unfamiliar with the  
9 phrase; is that fair?

14:17:56 10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Did you believe Ms. Bassett was  
12 familiar or unfamiliar with the phrase?

13 A. I would say familiar. I thought she  
14 was familiar with it.

15 Q. Let me ask a different question. Did  
16 you think she was familiar or unfamiliar with  
17 whatever the meaning of the phrase is?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Okay. What was the station's reaction  
14:18:18 20 to her use of that phrase?

21 A. Shock.

22 Q. With whom did you discuss it? How did  
23 you know people were shocked?

24 A. Just general conversation in the  
25 newsroom. More people knew what it meant than I



1 did.

2 Q. Can you remember any particular person  
3 with whom you had a discussion about  
4 Ms. Bassett's use of that?

5 A. It was general. No.

6 Q. It was general. Okay. That's fair.

7 Did anyone with the station come to  
8 you and ask you, What do you think about her use  
9 of the comment?

14:19:02 10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And what -- who did that?

12 A. Another colleague.

13 Q. Who was that?

14 A. Oh, gosh. I can't recall. It was --  
15 I can't recall because I was at my desk and  
16 someone just walked up and asked me.

17 Q. But you don't remember who that person  
18 was?

19 A. No, I don't. Sorry.

14:19:25 20 Q. Is it someone who's with the station  
21 now?

22 A. I don't think so. If I recall, it may  
23 have been one of our trainees or interns or  
24 someone like that.

25 Q. Got it.

1 Did you continue to talk with  
2 Ms. Bassett in the days between her making the  
3 comment and her ultimate termination from the  
4 station, which I'll submit to you was March 14,  
5 I think, 2023?

6 A. Not often, but yes.

7 Q. And what sorts of conversations did  
8 you have with her?

9 A. Encouraging her. Reminding her that  
10 God was in control and that God is able and that  
11 I was praying for her and concerned about her  
12 and her family, and again, that I did not  
13 believe that she meant it with any malice, I did  
14 not believe that she was a racist, and that I  
15 was her friend and I loved her and I would  
16 continue to pray for her.

17 Q. Do you still feel that way today?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Did you believe that Ms. Bassett  
20 should have been terminated?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. You did believe she should have been  
23 terminated.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Because of -- well, let me ask you a

1 better way. Why did you think she should have  
2 been terminated?

3 A. I think it would have been difficult  
4 for her and the station because of how people  
5 responded and because of how it -- our job is  
6 all about credibility and trust. And because so  
7 many people had lost that -- that trust, and  
8 trust is essential in this business, I think it  
9 would have been hard for her and hard for us.

14:21:26 10 And honestly, I think -- I don't think  
11 she wanted -- she would have wanted to stay if  
12 it meant hardship for other people. That's the  
13 kind of heart she has.

14 Q. Did she ever express to you that she  
15 didn't want to stay or you just assumed that?

16 A. I assumed it.

17 Q. Did you talk with Ms. Bassett strictly  
18 by telephone during these days, or did you  
19 exchange any text messages?

14:21:53 20 A. Some text messages and by phone.

21 Q. Okay. Did you see any changes at the  
22 television station in terms of ad sales after  
23 this comment, after the "fo shizzle my nizzle"  
24 comment, or would you have known about that?

25 A. I would not have known about that.

1           Q.    That would be something for the  
2   advertising department, I assume?

3           A.    Yes.   Sales, yes.

4           Q.    Sales.   Okay.

5                   How did you learn that Ms. Bassett was  
6   terminated?

7           A.    She told me.

8           Q.    What did she tell you?

9           A.    She told me that they let her go.   She  
10   seemed pretty devastated; but I told her that,  
11   you know, it is what it is, and God has  
12   something bigger and better for her.

13           Q.    You said she was devastated.   Describe  
14   for us, if you will:   What was her demeanor?  
15   What was she like when she was telling you?

16           A.    Lots of crying.   She could barely  
17   talk, and so I just tried to encourage her.

18           Q.    Did you continue to check in on  
19   Ms. Bassett in the days after her termination?

14:22:58 20           A.    Yes, I did.   It was not often but --  
21   you know, when I think about it.   You know, I'd  
22   say, How are you doing?   And she would check on  
23   me as well.

24           Q.    Did she continue to be upset, or do  
25   you know whether she continued to be upset about

1 her termination?

2 A. We didn't talk about it as much after  
3 the initial -- we didn't talk about that, and I  
4 think that was -- it was purposeful on my part  
5 and I think on her part as well.

6 Q. Right.

7 A. I really didn't want to talk about  
8 that. It was -- it was hurtful and it was  
9 painful, and I think it was for everybody here.  
10 So I -- you know, I tried to stay positive and  
11 keep positive for her.

14:23:42

12 Q. So it was hurtful. You said it was  
13 hurtful, it was painful. Her termination or her  
14 making the statement?

15 A. The whole situation. All of it.

16 Q. Let's move to talking about  
17 Ms. Bassett's replacement. Who took her spot?  
18 Do you know who that is?

14:24:07

19 A. Samantha German anchors in that spot  
20 now.

21 Q. Samantha German. For the record, what  
22 is Ms. German's race?

23 A. African-American.

24 Q. And do you know her age?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Could you give me your best guess?

2 MS. HODGES: Object to the form.

3 A. I have no idea.

4 BY MS. WAIDE:

5 Q. Is she younger than you or older than  
6 you?

7 A. I'm older than most people here.

8 Q. Okay. Well, you've been there since  
9 college, so you're not that old, right? It's  
10 just that you started early. You started early.

14:24:36

11 A. But yeah, I -- I'm older than most  
12 people here, so I would definitely say I'm older  
13 than she is.

14 Q. Fair enough. Do you know about  
15 Ms. German's qualifications, where she came  
16 from?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Do you work directly with her?

19 A. No.

14:24:54

20 Q. So you're still on that schedule where  
21 you're on an opposite shift from her the way you  
22 were with Ms. Bassett when Ms. Bassett was  
23 leaving.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Is that fair? All right.

1           Let's talk about other recent hires at  
2           the television station. Ms. Bassett left in  
3           March of 2023. That's when she was terminated.  
4           Do you know who else has been hired since she  
5           left other than Ms. German?

6           A.    A lot of people.

7           Q.    Tell me the ones you remember.  
8           Specifically -- let me ask it this way:  
9           Specifically on air, either -- you know, the  
10          talent, right? On-air anchors or on-air  
11          reporters.

12          A.    Well, several meteorologists have been  
13          hired. Let me see. Several reporters. And  
14          that's about it.

15          Q.    Do you know the names of the  
16          meteorologists who have been hired?

17          A.    Gosh. Ashley Sivik.

18          Q.    Okay.

19          A.    Chase, and I can't remember -- because  
20          they all -- they don't work my shift, so I don't  
21          know, like, his last name. Oh, gosh. Let's  
22          see. Todd Adams. And there's one other, and I  
23          can't think of her name. And I see her face. I  
24          can't believe I can't think of her name. But  
25          she -- they all worked the morning shift.

1           Q.   What about the reporters who've been  
2           hired?

3           A.   We've had several.  Let me see.  We  
4           have Teddy Reidy, Verlecia Gavin, Morgan Harris,  
5           Nathan Lee, and we have one who recently left  
6           who was in news.

7           Q.   And who's the one who left?

8           A.   Oh, gosh.  His name just went right of  
9           my head.  I'm sorry.  It's (indiscernible) --

14:27:14 10          Q.   It's okay.  It's not a memory test.

11          A.   -- with names.  Yes.  But he -- he  
12          recently left.

13          Q.   And he's a male?

14          A.   Yes.

15          Q.   And was he an anchor or he was just an  
16          on-camera reporter?

17          A.   Reporter.  On-camera reporter.

14:27:35 18          Q.   Let's talk a little bit about the  
19          market for your station.  Do you know what the  
20          viewing area is?

21          A.   Yes.  Our viewing area -- we call it  
22          DMA.  And it consists of the largest counties in  
23          central Mississippi.  We also reach some areas  
24          of Arkansas and Louisiana.

25          Q.   Okay.  Do you have any idea about the



1 demographics of the viewers in that viewing  
2 area, like, their ages or their races, that sort  
3 of thing?

4 A. I know some. I know that we have a  
5 large African-American population, but in some  
6 of the outer counties, not as much. So I think  
7 probably the largest urban and African-American  
8 area would definitely be Hinds County.

9 Q. Is the station itself located in Hinds  
10 County?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Do you have any idea about the general  
13 age of your viewership?

14 A. It varies. I think we have young  
15 viewers, but most of them tend to get their news  
16 from social media rather than newscasts. But I  
17 would say probably our viewers -- and we  
18 actually do surveys -- from 18 up to elderly.

19 Q. So it kind of runs the gamut?

20 A. It does.

21 Q. Let's talk about the anchors who are  
22 there right now. Do you know how many anchors  
23 the station employs?

24 A. Well --

25 Q. Maybe you have to count up the shows,

1 right?

2 A. I can start with morning, on mornings.

3 Q. Okay. Tell me who those anchors are.

4 A. Wilson Stribling and Samantha German.

5 And then we have Ashley Garner, who does the  
6 noon and the weekends; and then she also anchors  
7 at 4:00 and 4:30. And then, of course, there's  
8 me and CJ LeMaster. Then Howard and Courtney  
9 Ann Jackson. And Patrice Clark anchors the Fox  
10 newscast at 5:30 and at 9:00 and 9:30. Then on  
11 weekends we have Morgan Harris, and Holly Emery  
12 does the early mornings on the weekends.

13 Q. I'd like to talk about each of those  
14 anchors if we can. Let's start with Wilson and  
15 Samantha. They're in the morning.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. Wilson is a male; is that correct?

18 A. Right.

19 Q. And what is his race and age?

14:30:18 20 A. He is white. I have no idea how old  
21 he is.

22 Q. Okay. And Samantha, a female. Do you  
23 know her race and age?

24 A. African-American. No.

25 Q. No on the age. What about Ashley

1 Garner at noon?

2 A. Ashley is African-American.

3 Q. Any idea about her age?

4 A. No.

5 Q. And then obviously we know you're a  
6 female and African-American, right?

7 A. Right.

8 Q. CJ LeMaster got stolen from us up in  
9 North Mississippi, so I know that he is a  
10 Caucasian male, right?

14:30:52

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. He did a great job up here. Y'all are  
13 lucky to have him.

14 What about Howard and Courtney Ann?

15 A. Courtney is a white female. I don't  
16 know how old she is.

17 Q. What about --

18 A. Howard is a black male.

19 Q. And then what about Patrice Clark?

14:31:11

20 A. African-American female.

21 Q. Any idea about her age?

22 A. No.

23 Q. And Morgan Harris?

24 A. African-American female.

25 Q. Any idea about her age?

1 A. No.

2 Q. And Holly Emery, I think is the last  
3 person you mentioned.

4 A. Yes. She's a white female.

5 Q. And her age?

6 A. I don't know.

7 Q. We'll be able to tell all these people  
8 you did not get their age right -- I mean wrong,  
9 right?

14:31:36 10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Didn't get it.

12 A. I don't know their --

13 Q. We appreciate that.

14 A. -- their ages.

15 Q. Are there any other anchors currently?  
16 Any other anchors?

17 A. No, not that -- no. I'm thinking, but  
18 no. Those are the shows that we have, yes.

19 Q. How many on-camera reporters do you  
14:31:54 20 have, if you know?

21 A. Holly does a lot of the reporting on  
22 mornings. And then we have Verlecia, Morgan,  
23 Teddy Reidy, Nathan Lee, Chris Fields, Quentin  
24 Smith.

25 Oh, and I forgot about the sports

1 anchors. Patrick Johnstone is a white male, and  
2 Kasie Thomas is an African-American female.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. And I don't know their ages. But --  
5 and I think that's it in terms of reporters.

6 Q. Can you back up, if you would, and  
7 tell me the ages, if you know, and the races of  
8 those reporters that you identified other than  
9 the sports anchors which you just identified for  
10 me?

11 A. Okay. I don't know how old Holly is.  
12 She's a white female. Teddy Reidy is a white  
13 male. I don't know how old he is. Morgan  
14 Harris is a black female. Don't know her age.  
15 Verlecia Gavin is a black female. Chris Fields  
16 is a black male. Quentin Smith is a black male.  
17 I'm trying to go through.

18 And we have a new hire. I just forgot  
19 about her. Claire. Claire is a white female.

20 Q. Are you ever involved in the hiring or  
21 firing decisions at the station?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Are you ever involved in the decisions  
24 about -- you say that with a smile, right? You  
25 don't want to be involved in that.

1 A. (Indiscernible.)

2 Q. Are you ever involved at the station  
3 in decisions about discipline or reprimands?

4 A. No.

5 Q. I want to talk a little bit about  
6 disciplines and reprimands. You know, you're  
7 live on air a lot, right? And have you ever  
8 said anything on air that you thought was  
9 inappropriate, somehow incorrect, maybe that you  
10 needed to apologize for?

14:34:01

11 MS. HODGES: Object to form. You can  
12 answer if you know.

13 A. No. Other than mispronouncing a name,  
14 that's it.

15 BY MS. WAIDE:

16 Q. Nothing that the station has ever come  
17 to you and said, You should retract that, or we  
18 don't feel good about the fact that you said  
19 that?

14:34:23

20 A. No.

21 Q. What about your coworkers? What about  
22 other anchors there? Have you ever heard them  
23 say things that you think were somehow  
24 inappropriate, incorrect?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Have you ever said anything that you  
2 just thought, Wow, I wish I had not said that on  
3 air?

4 A. No.

5 Q. What about your co-workers? Have you  
6 ever thought that they said something that you  
7 thought, Wow, that was not a great thing to say  
8 on air?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Other than the two comments that we've  
11 talked about today, the "grandmammy" comment and  
12 the "fo shizzle my nizzle" comment, have you  
13 ever known Ms. Bassett to say anything on air  
14 that you thought was inappropriate?

15 A. No.

16 Q. Do you know anything about the  
17 station's policies about discipline in terms of  
18 if some -- if an employee does make an  
19 inappropriate comment on air, whether that  
20 results in termination or discipline?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Do you know whether the station has  
23 what I would call a progressive discipline  
24 policy, meaning, you know -- sort of like a  
25 series of strikes is the best way I know to

1 describe it? Maybe this is a first warning,  
2 this is a second warning?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Okay. Tell me about that.

5 A. All I know is that, you know, usually  
6 if there's a problem, you're called in. If the  
7 problem is repeated, then you're written up.  
8 And -- and I -- I'm not sure what happens after  
9 that.

14:35:58 10 Q. How do you know about that policy?

11 A. Just from general knowledge, and I  
12 think -- just from general knowledge.

13 Q. When you say "general knowledge," do  
14 you mean you read it in a handbook or someone  
15 told you about it?

16 A. I think someone mentioned it.

17 Q. Do you know who the person is who  
18 mentioned it to you?

19 A. I don't. I can't -- it's been years  
14:36:25 20 ago.

21 Q. And you're not -- you're not getting  
22 in trouble, right? So that's fair. You're not  
23 getting these disciplines.

24 A. No.

25 Q. Do you know of other people who are?



1 A. No.

2 Q. Have you known anyone to be  
3 disciplined since you've been there? And I mean  
4 that you have known about personally.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Tell me who that was.

7 A. I can't remember who it was. It was  
8 something out in the field that happened, and  
9 basically they were talked to, and they shared  
10 that with me. I can't remember if it was a  
11 photographer or the actual reporter.

12 Q. Okay. Can you remember what happened  
13 out in the field?

14 A. I think it was a missed opportunity,  
15 not in place when they were supposed to be,  
16 something like that.

17 Q. Okay. It was not a live comment; is  
18 that --

19 A. No. No. No.

14:37:23 20 Q. What was the public reaction, if you  
21 know, when Ms. Bassett was terminated?

22 A. I think there were lots of people who  
23 were happy, but there were also lots of people  
24 who were not happy. There were many who were  
25 torn. And I think they were like me: They

1 hated to see it happen, but they tried to  
2 understand. And that's where I was. I hated to  
3 see it happen, but I understood.

4 And that's what I got from -- when I  
5 -- because I do speaking engagements, and that's  
6 what I got from -- I got people who either  
7 thought it was wrong, thought it was right, or  
8 they hated to see it happen and they understood.

9 Q. Was there a racial division in those  
10 people who either thought it was wrong or  
11 thought it was right?

12 A. I heard -- I heard it from both,  
13 African-Americans as well as whites --

14 Q. They --

15 A. -- that fell into those categories.

16 Q. So is it fair to say there were some  
17 African-Americans and some whites who thought  
18 she should have been fired?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And there were some African-Americans  
21 and some whites who thought the station should  
22 have retained her.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Do you know who made the decision to  
25 terminate her at the station?

1 A. No.

2 Q. Do you know in general at the station  
3 who makes termination decisions?

4 A. In general, it depends on the  
5 department.

6 Q. In general who makes termination  
7 decisions as to anchors on air, talent?

8 A. That would be our news director and  
9 our general manager.

14:39:13 10 Q. Who was the news director at time  
11 Ms. Bassett was terminated?

12 A. Charlie Jones.

13 Q. And who was the general manager at the  
14 time?

15 A. Ted Fortenberry.

16 Q. Did either Mr. Jones or  
17 Mr. Fortenberry ask you whether or not you  
18 believed Ms. Bassett should be terminated?

19 A. No.

14:39:33 20 Q. Did anyone associated with the station  
21 ask you that?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Do you know if any of your colleagues  
24 were asked whether or not she should be  
25 terminated?

1           A.    No.

2                   MS. WAIDE:   I have no further  
3           questions, Kim.

4                   MS. HODGES:   I don't think I have any.  
5           Keith, do we need to take a break or are we  
6           good?

7                   You're on mute, but I'm assuming you  
8           just said no.   Okay.

9                   All right.   No questions.   Thank you.

10                   (Deposition concluded at 2:39 p.m.)

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## C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI )

COUNTY OF MONROE )

RE: ORAL DEPOSITION OF MAGGIE WADE-DIXON

I, Gena Mattison Glenn, CSR 1568, a  
Notary Public within and for the aforesaid  
county and state, duly commissioned and acting,  
hereby certify that the foregoing proceedings  
were taken before me at the time and place set  
forth above; that the statements were written by  
me in machine shorthand; that the statements  
were thereafter transcribed by me, or under my  
direct supervision, by means of computer-aided  
transcription, constituting a true and correct  
transcription of the proceedings; and that the  
witness was by me duly sworn to testify to the  
truth and nothing but the truth in this cause.

I further certify that I am not a  
relative or employee of any of the parties, or  
of counsel, nor am I financially or otherwise  
interested in the outcome of this action.

Witness my hand and seal on this 18th day  
of October, 2024.

My Commission Expires:  
July 19, 2027

-----  
MS CSR 1568  
Notary Public  
TN License No. 884

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI  
NORTHERN DIVISION

BARBIE BASSETT PLAINTIFF  
VS. CAUSE NO. 3:23-CV-03154-DPJ-ASH  
GRAY MEDIA GROUP DEFENDANT

CERTIFICATE

I, Maggie Wade-Dixon, have read the foregoing pages, 1-45, of the transcript of my deposition given on October 3, 2024, and it is true, correct and complete to the best of my knowledge, recollection and belief except for the list of corrections, if any, attached on a separate sheet herewith. Witness my hand, this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Maggie Wade-Dixon

CERTIFICATE

Subscribed and sworn to before me, this  
the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public in and for the  
County of \_\_\_\_\_  
State of Mississippi  
My Commission Expires: \_\_\_\_\_

CORRECTION LIST  
Barbie Bassett vs. Gray Media Group  
No. 3:23-CV-03154-DPJ-ASH

October 3, 2024

Maggie Wade-Dixon

PAGE	LINE	CORRECTION	REASON
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GLENN-HENRY REPORTING (662) 315-2613

GLENN-HENRY REPORTING  
P.O. BOX 492  
AMORY, MS 38821-0492

October 18, 2024

Honorable M. Kimberly Hodges  
SMOAK & STEWART  
International Place Tower II  
6410 Poplar Avenue, Suite 300  
Memphis, TN 38119

RE: Barbie Bassett vs. Gray Media Group  
No. 3:23-CV-03154-DPJ-ASH

Dear Ms. Hodges:

Enclosed is your copy of the transcript of the deposition of Maggie Wade-Dixon, taken in the above entitled and numbered cause on October 3, 2024.

Also enclosed is the signature page and corrections page to be used by the deponent when reading your copy of the deposition.

After the signature page and corrections page have been completed by the deponent, and properly signed by a Notary, please return these forms to Ms. Rachel Pierce Waide so that they may be attached to the original transcript.

If the completed signature page and corrections sheet have not been received by Ms. Rachel Pierce Waide on or before November 23, 2024, (30 days), reading and signing will be waived.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Gena Mattison Glenn  
CSR 1568  
Enclosures  
cc: Ms. Rachel Pierce Waide